

LIFELINES

of

LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Phone: (972) 867-5588

Fax: (972) 985-5588

Internet Home Page: <http://planolutheran.com>

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August 2018

A Summer Well Spent

Summer is fast coming to an end and soon another school year will be upon us. Where did it go? Well, time flies when you are having fun, and much fun was had this summer. My family had a wonderful vacation to the East Coast where we got caught up with my father, brothers, and their families. We met at my brother's house in North Carolina and it was a laid-back, unhurried week getting to spend time with loved ones. We also got away the following week with just our immediate family in the smoky mountains, relaxing and enjoying being with each other. It's always nice to get away with family and forget about work for a while, if for no other reason, it reenergizes you and refocuses your attention upon return.

No sooner had I returned from vacation, then I turned around and took off on another road trip. This time not on vacation, but for Higher Things –the youth conference we have been attending annually now for 5 years. The destination was Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. It is about a 12 hour drive, and this year we decided to try skipping hotel stays by driving through the night and sleeping on a tour bus. In theory, this was a great idea. In reality, well, let's just say one valuable lesson I learned this summer, is that I cannot sleep on a bus full of teenagers. –Who knew?

Despite a shortness of sleep, the conference was really superb. Higher Things always provides a quality program for the youth, but this one in particular was magnificent. The campus was a good fit, not too big and we had a great space for worship. The speakers also did a good job and the kids were engaged, well-behaved and had good time. (You can read their own recollections about the trip in the following pages.) There were over 800 people in attendance at the conference in Carbondale and that experience alone is positive and reaffirming. If you recall my last newsletter, I mentioned the challenging demographics that our church body (and every church body in America!) is facing, but seeing hundreds of young Lutherans singing their hearts out to hymns, praying the Lutheran liturgy, learning from the Scriptures together, and enjoying Christian fellowship with one another, truly gives me hope for the future of our synod. The faith once and for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3) is alive and vibrant among both youths and adults at these conferences.

I genuinely love our trips to Higher Things, and one more reason in particular, is because I get to spend a lot of time with the youth and get to know them better. I have confirmed almost all of them by now, and so I have spent several hours with all of them in confirmation classes over the years. But the youth conference is a totally different setting and now they are older and more mature. It is truly rewarding, interesting, and encouraging to see how the youth of our church have grown and are becoming the Christian men and women God has called them to be.

God's blessings on the rest of your summer,
PrS



prepare for worship in august

Sunday, August 5: Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Ex. 16:2-15; Eph. 4:1-16, John 6:22-35
Hymn of the Day: "Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer," 918

Sunday, August 12: Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: 1 Kings 19:1-8; Eph. 4:17-5:2; John 6:35-51
Hymn of the Day: "Lord, Enthroned in Heav'nly Splendor," 534

Sunday, August 19: Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

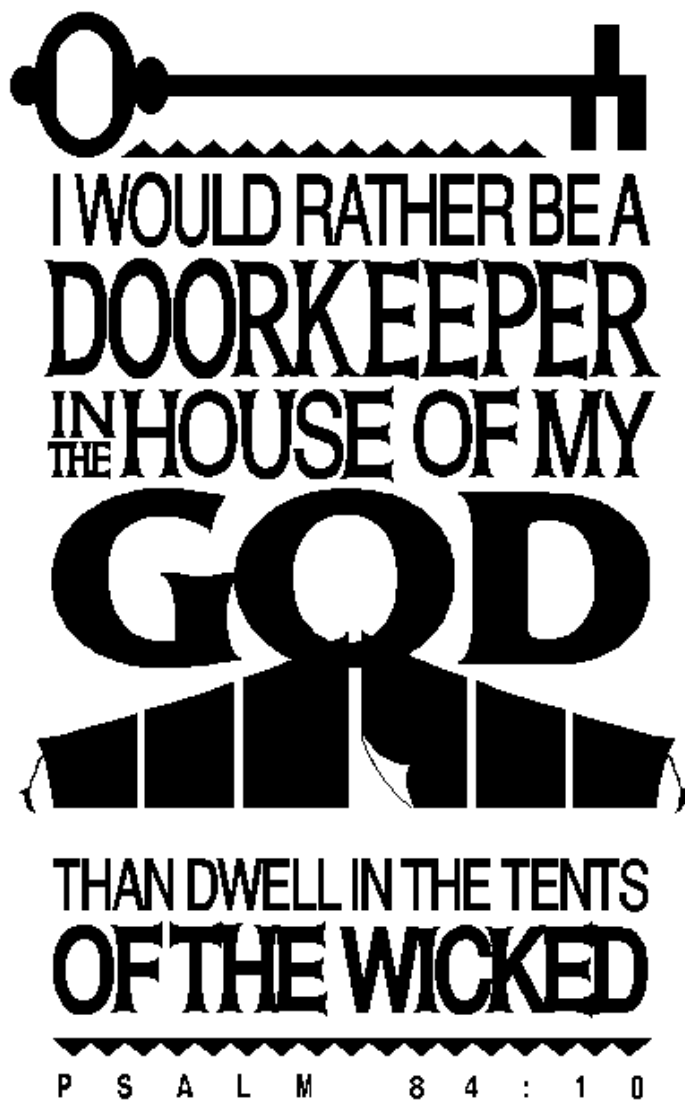
Texts: Prov. 9:1-10 or Josh. 24:1-2a, 14-18; Eph. 5:6-21; John 6:51-69
Hymn of the Day: "O God, My Faithful God," 969

Sunday, August 26: Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Is. 29:11-19; Eph. 5:22-33; Mark 7:1-13
Hymn of the Day: "Lord, Help Us Ever to Retain," 865

Bring-A-Friend Sunday

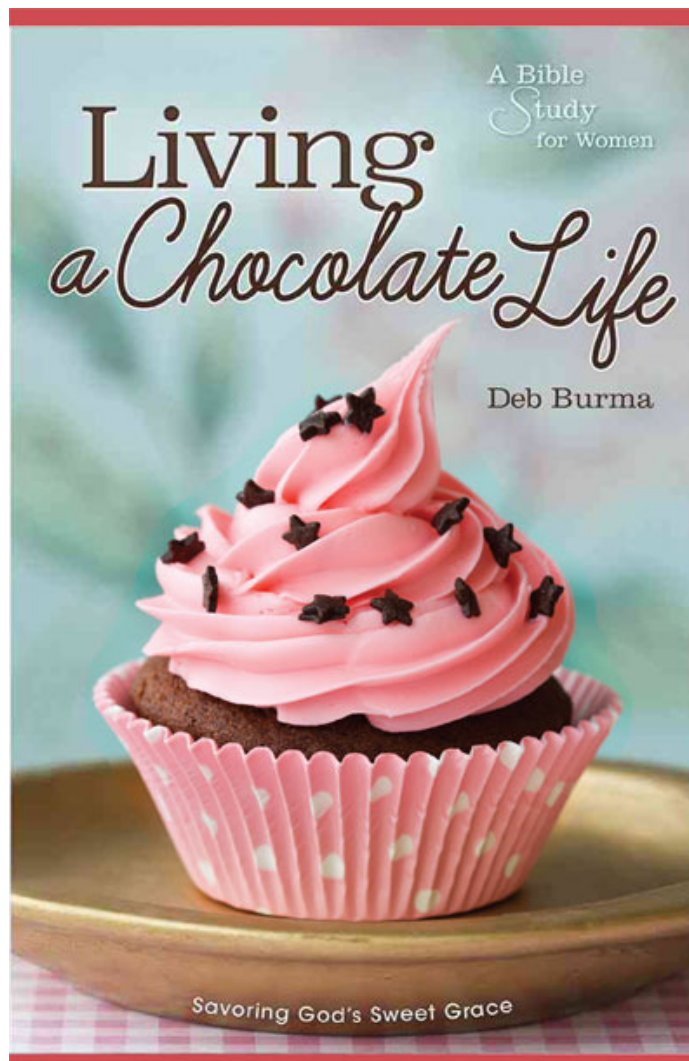
Do you know someone -- a school friend, a co-worker, a neighbor, or anyone else -- who might be interested in coming to church with you sometime, but you haven't asked them yet? Well, now you have a great excuse: September 30 is Bring-A-Friend Sunday! They'll be welcome to join us for the Fifth-Sunday potluck after church, and the Board of Outreach will have something for all guests to take home. This could be a great way to reach out to someone who is looking for a church home or who is curious about the Christian faith. If you have questions (or suggestions) about this event, please let us know.





A big thank you to all our friends at LOL for all the prayers and wishes you have bestowed on us during this second trying time of cancer. I'm not in remission yet, but things are improving after my last scans. We are so grateful for the blessings of our Lord and for the love from LOL. I'm currently on a 4 week "no chemo" break so we are very grateful for that!

Carl & Jan



Women's Bible Study
starts up again on Tuesday
August 14th at noon.

"Living a Chocolate Life"
by Deb Burma.
Workbook \$5.

Bring your lunch and study
God's word.

Please sign up on the sheet in
the narthex or let Charis
Bennett know if you plan to
attend. (8 weeks)



Teen Times

The Lord of Life Sr. IMPACT youth group traveled to Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois from July 9-14 for Higher Things; a youth conference that has the slogan, “dare to be Lutheran”. Higher Things has been holding youth conferences during the summer since 2000 and has grown from a few hundred in the early years to several thousand this year. Twenty-six youth and adults traveled on a charter bus to be a part of one of the four Higher Things conferences held this year. The following statements are thoughts and reflections of the participants from the Lord of Life group:

This was my 3rd conference and yet I was still blown away by the awesome power of nearly 1000 voices worshipping together in one room. The overwhelming joy I felt magnified the intense love for Christ at this conference.

Adam Buckmeier

Higher Things was really amazing. All of the sessions were delightful to listen to and strengthened my faith. The best thing about Higher Things is the people who go there. Everyone is so nice and enjoyable to be around.

Noah Rienert

My favorite part of Higher Things was getting to realize that so many kids who are my age share a common faith throughout the U.S.

Madeline Prescott

Higher Things is something that I look forward to every year. I love learning more about God’s Word and protecting my faith with 1000 other people. It is an amazing experience with great pastors to teach you and amazing people to learn with.

Garrett Hacker

One of the best parts of going on the Higher Things trips is having the chance to connect with so many people who share your beliefs. Another great part of Higher Things is worshipping with almost 1000 people. It’s amazing to sing all of my favorite hymns with so many people.

Kelsey Crabtree

Higher Things has been a fun and unique experience that I will never forget. I never imagined so many people could come together and sing traditional Lutheran hymns, and many even doing it by memory! Although it was very different from what I am used to, the Higher Things conference allowed me to escape my comfort zone and grow in my faith at the same time making this experience more memorable. Thank you Scott for inviting me!

Rachel Perry

What I liked about Higher Things the most this year had to be the worship services. When I went in and everyone started singing, it was probably the most powerful thing I have ever heard. The opening and closing Divine Services were when this really showed. (Also the food was good!)

David Messinger

This was my 3rd Higher Things and this year probably had the best sermons and worship services, and the music was great!

Nick Moudy

It was a lot of fun. I learned a lot and made some new friends. I loved the prayer sessions

Stephen Belcher

I thought that Higher Things was interesting. Some of the pastors were funny and told weird stories. I have never had that much church in one week. I had a fun time.

Seth Perry

Higher Things is always "fun times". Leo did not come in last place this time. (Yes, there is a story behind this statement)
Sam Carter

I had a wonderful time at Higher Things this year. It was so great to see all the Lutherans gathered together. The Holy Spirit also touched many hearts during the services. Fun Times!
Sarah Loewecke

The conference opened up doors to have conversations with one another about our faith. Out of all 7 conferences I have attended, this year, because of the topics and the participants, spurred more questions and opinions which we all openly discussed together.
Lauren Chumbley

It was a lot of fun and very enlightening. My favorite breakaway session was the one that explained Mormonism and what they believe.
Danny Ozlowski

Higher Things was great this year. The bus was amazing because we got to be together and drive through the night. The songs were fantastic and the organ and organist were great. Cracker Barrel was as usual great!
Ethan Hacker

I had so much fun on this trip, there were many amazing parts. I enjoyed the worship services every day and learning about the Lord. It was really nice to be around so many wonderful people who have the same beliefs as us. I can't wait until next year!
Caroline Loewecke

It was really great to have 3 days full of worship and learning. It keeps your focus where it's supposed to be – on God.
Caitlyn Moudy

Higher Things is always fun times. Breakout sessions are almost always interesting, and I end up learning a lot from them. The music is phenomenal and hearing the singing/music is great!
Ambrose Shaltanis

An uplifting experience, a glimpse of "monastic life", and an awakening to the present state of our church. We are in good hands. With 800 plus high school youth reaching out to learn, Higher Things is a place for fellowship and theological reinforcement.
Bailey Lund

Pastor Kuhlman was a great speaker and I enjoyed his plenary sessions on the 10 Commandments. He was clear, interesting (not dull or boring), and he went to the point and kept everyone engaged in the session.
Magdalena Shaltanis

I really enjoyed having the opportunity to go to Higher Things. Being around that many people who believe what you believe and are used to worshipping the same way you are was an amazing experience. I especially enjoyed being in the choir and getting to sing with such a big group of talented singers who were able to put together a big stack of music in four days. I am glad I got to take a break from my hectic life and focus on my faith at Higher Things.
Lora Frinsko

The thing that stands out to me about Higher Things is the traditional nature of the services. It was nice and uplifting to see and hear so many people participating in something hundreds of years old. The experience was beautiful.
Megan Schoenleb

I enjoyed the services and how powerful 800 plus people singing hymns together was. The breakaway sessions were great and taught me a lot.
Amanda Kunschke

As the crucifix was carried down towards the altar, the sound of 800 voices hit me so hard I lost my breath. Chills ran down my spine at the sight of so many brothers and sisters in Christ singing about what he has done for us, a beautiful harmony of voices echoing throughout our worship space. Worship truly is my favorite thing about Higher Things – my words don't do it justice. Being there with so many others always makes me imagine the company of heaven praying and singing along with us – Christians of the past, present, and future looking to Christ for salvation. Everything at Higher Things is meant to show us the depth of our sin, but even more so, our assurance in salvation. These conferences always feel more like a retreat where I get to escape the external world and celebrate my identity as a Lutheran. I always leave feeling renewed, and this time was no exception! Thank you Lord of Life for giving us this opportunity!

Cari Rienert

I can't add much more except to say that in my opinion this was one of the top three summer youth group experiences since I have been Director of Youth Ministry at Lord of Life. I thank you all for your support of this ministry and thank God for the gifts and blessings He bestows on Lord of Life Lutheran Church.

Until next time, God's blessings to you!

Scott Peters

LWML Texas District 2018-2020 Adopted Mission Grants

2018-2020 Mite Goal Adopted: \$350,900 (\$180,000 for Mission Grants)

1. Reaching Visually Impaired Inmates with God's Love – Lutheran Braille Workers – \$18,500
2. ACTS of Love Early Childhood Education Center – Leander – \$20,000
3. DCE Scholarships – Concordia University Texas – \$24,000
4. Forward in Faith – Funding the Ministry of Faith Lutheran High School – \$10,000
5. Let It Shine for Children with Autism – Lutheran Special Education Ministries – \$10,000
6. Scholarships for Seminarians – Texas District LCMS – \$50,000
7. Multi-Ethnic Ministries of North Texas – \$25,000
9. Navigation Life and Faith - LINC Austin – \$10,000
10. Shepherd of the Hills Church Plant Children's Ministry – San Antonio – \$20,000 (will receive \$4,285)
11. Expanding the Mission at Lutheran Student Center – Hope for the Nations Lutheran Church – Arlington – \$15,000 (will receive \$3,215)
13. Spanish and American Sign Language Bible Stories – Lutheran Friends of the Deaf – \$5,000

Lord of Life Lutheran Church contributed \$1213.57 for the mission grants for 2016-2018. Please get a mite box, fill it with coins, pray for the current mission grants and bring your donations to church the second Sunday of each month or to the office or an LWML meeting.

This month we are happy to include an article by Nicholas Belcher. Nick grew up at Lord of Life and is now a student at Concordia University in Irvine, California. He has a double major: theology and political science and hopes to attend one of our church's seminaries in the near future. Because of his double major, he offers this interesting assessment of the recent Supreme Court decision concerning the Masterpiece Cake shop, a case which dealt directly with religious liberty.

Much can be, and indeed has been, said about the Masterpiece Cakeshop decision handed down from the Supreme Court just last month. Upon finishing a reading of the Court's majority opinion, what soon becomes apparent is the Court's failure to lay out the legal and philosophical groundwork needed for a more "weighty" victory one way or the other; most of the deeper discussion of the big issues in the case were included in the varied concurrences and dissents following the Court's opinion. A clear stance our country will take when specifically addressing the tension of protecting religious convictions about marriage and what then constitutes unlawful discrimination against LGBT folks is evidently put on hold. With that said, though, as a fellow Lutheran brother in Christ Jesus, I believe there is reason for us to take some sober comfort and encouragement in Jack Phillips' win.

Our comfort as Christians rightly begins with an understanding of who we are according to the Gospel. As Paul has written, "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). Indeed, we are presently both sinners and saints, blessed by our King who bled and died for us and who then rose triumphant over the devil and the grave. We who are heirs of life eternal "[c]ount it all joy...when [we] meet trials of various kinds...[knowing] that the testing of [our] faith produces steadfastness" (Jas. 1:2-3).

Moving now to Phillips' case, I believe we can take comfort in the fact that another fellow Christian was willing to endure the immense spiritual, physical, financial, and familial stress associated with standing firm in the face of great hostility. It's no secret that many in our nation despise the Christian faith, ready to mock and do away with its "bigoted," "hateful" tenets. Now, true enough, not every generation needs a Martin Luther, nor should we seek to emulate his colorful and, at times, eyebrow-raising boldness (not to suggest anyone reading this would). However, what we can know for sure is that every generation needs

godly men and women who, out of love for Christ, stand ready to bear witness to the hope within them even as the devil tries to bring us all to ruin. Jack Phillips is a humble baker who should bring us Lutherans a certain amount of joy in the sense that he is proof there are still Christians across America who will not shrink back from boldly confessing Christ, no matter how dark things seem to be getting.

As far as the case itself goes, there are some sensible reasons for today's Christians to maintain hope for the future of our country. The newly-retired Justice Anthony Kennedy writes, "[it] hardly requires restating that government has no role in deciding or even suggesting whether the religious ground for Phillips' conscience-based objection is legitimate or illegitimate. On these facts, the Court must draw the inference that Phillips' religious objection was not considered with the neutrality that the Free Exercise Clause requires" (p. 20). It ought to be seen as a good sign that the Court was decided 7-2 in favor of Phillips given the Colorado Civil Rights Commission's hostility, even for the most jaded conservative Americans. That the majority was agreed upon this point, and tacitly reaffirmed Justice Kennedy's statements in *Obergefell v. Hodges* calling for the fair treatment of traditional religious views on marriage, is a good thing; the legal principle known as *stare decisis* makes it thus. According to *stare decisis*, points in litigation are to be determined according to precedent. This means that the Court has drawn a clear line in the proverbial sand stating that while "[the] outcome of cases like this in other circumstances must await further elaboration in the courts...these disputes must be resolved with tolerance, without undue disrespect to sincere religious beliefs, and without subjecting gay persons to indignities when they seek goods and services in an open market" (p. 21). In other words, sincere religious objections in similar cases must be respected or else the courts have every reason not to rule in favor of the aggressor(s).

The bottom line is: Christianity is absolutely still relevant in 21st century society despite assertions otherwise, Christians have the right to sensibly take their religious convictions into the public square, and Christ has already told us that "[in] the world [we] will have tribulation. But take heart; [He has] overcome the world" (Jn. 16:33).

-Nick Belcher



FROM THE MUSIC DESK

I am a book person. I like to hold them. I like to place a bookmark in them to see how much reading has been accomplished, and to see how much remains to be read. I like to make notes in the margins, and bracket paragraphs. I'm guessing that those of you who like to read books on a screen (Kindle, Nook, etc.) will try and win me over. So, I will acknowledge, right now, that there may be benefits to a screen format, like making the print larger – yes, I could appreciate that benefit. But, for now, I still like the hard copy.

These days, I am spending quality time with our hymnal, Lutheran Service Book (LSB), by reading, selecting and practicing hymns for the services. But, LSB is more than just a collection of some hymns. Our Divine Services are in the front portion, as well as other services and resources. You can even find the dates for Easter through 2050! However, right now I only want to address the book and its cover.

Much thought over a period of nearly eight years went into the LSB by the members of the Commission on Worship. Even the cover was considered, and provides food for thought. I would encourage you to take a few minutes, perhaps before a service begins, to pull out an LSB from under the chair in front of you, and look at the front and back covers. A first look reveals a gold cross. A closer look reveals embossed symbols. Admittedly, this is very subtle. On page ix of the Introduction, there is a description of the symbolism that has gone into the front and back covers, from the gold leaf cross reminding us of the glorious resurrection of our Lord, to the hand of God, a cross, and a dove on the back cover depicting the Trinity.

If you have time, open to the inside covers. Easily located, prayers for our own personal devotion have been given to us. The front inside cover includes, among others, prayers for before and after worship, and before and after communion, while two Creeds and the Lord's Prayer are on the back inside cover. I would encourage you to become familiar with this resource if you, heretofore, have not used it.

This summer, I learned that a cousin of mine has a hymnal which belonged to my grandfather, a man I knew little about. My cousin sent me a picture of the hymnal. His name was embossed in gold on the front. I can almost feel the letters of his name, much like I can feel the letters of my own name on my confirmation hymnal, and like you can feel the embossed symbols on our LSB. Although I don't have it personally, this is one very tangible connection to someone who died 100 years ago.

In the Introduction to LSB it states: "Lutheran Service Book is offered with the prayer that it may be used in all its fullness to give voice to the prayer, praise, and thanksgiving of God's holy people as they are graciously served by Him through Word and Sacrament." So, look at the prayers on the inside cover, and feel the symbols representing what is depicted in word and song inside. My prayer is that our LSB can be a very tangible connection for you to our Lord.

August Birthdays and Anniversaries

- 1 Brian & Devrie Hahn (38)
- 2 Travis Bennett
- 2 Debbie Olsen
- 2 Leo Parrent
- 2 Carol Read
- 3 Shannon Nuschler
- 4 Doug & Kathy Hite (17)
- 5 Sherri Kunschke
- 5 Jeff & Kara Prescott (23)
- 6 Cathleen Ott
- 7 Scott Peters
- 7 Rob & Amy Reinert (19)
- 8 Trent & Jackie Barnes (3)
- 8 Tony & Nevelle Vess (59)
- 10 Jim Hampton
- 12 Carol Ozlowski
- 13 Barbara Botello
- 13 Earl Lund
- 13 Rachel Ozlowski
- 14 Dixie Hacker
- 14 Phaedra Shaltanis
- 16 Joanne Keeney
- 16 Mike Paradise
- 16 Audrey Thiel
- 16 Ben & Reba Williams (43)
- 17 Duffy & Cindy Carter (22)
- 17 Tim & Carol Ozlowski (27)
- 18 Ben Lutek
- 18 Christine Messinger
- 18 Kevin Tyler
- 21 Reba Williams
- 22 Matt & Sarah Sims (20)
- 25 Brian & Gail Wolf (39)
- 26 Malinda Pittson
- 27 Mavis Anderson
- 28 Joanne Benner
- 28 Nita Berger
- 28 Hayden Crabtree
- 28 Bill & Charis Bennett (42)
- 28 Jeff & Nita Berger (25)
- 29 Jan Carper
- 29 Lance Crabtree
- 30 Doug Hite
- 30 Tom Read



Lord of Life Small Groups

EMPTY NESTERS' CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Mike and Sandra Paradise at (972) 424-2951 or itsparadise.inplano@verizon.net
- † Will meet on Sat. August 18th, Out to Eat

EPIC PARENTING

- † For 30ish couples with kids
- † For info contact Ben Scarth BenjaminScarth@yahoo.com
- † Usually meet one Sunday a month in the afternoon or evening

FRUITS OF THE VINE CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Scott Peters at 972-898-3351 cell or speters@planolutheran.com
- † Will meet on Sun. August 12th at 5:30 PM

GOOD NEWS CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Chris Oltmann at (972) 727-6330 or Mike Kunschke at (847) 951-6974
- † Usually meet the 2nd Sat. of each month at 6:30 PM for Bible study

MIXED BLESSINGS

- † For info contact Fred and Ruth Bernhardt at (972) 398-0771
- † Will meet on Sat. August 18th at 6:30 PM

TWENTY SOMETHINGS

- † For couples and singles in their twenties
- † For info contact Pastor Shaltanis at PastorShaltanis@yahoo.com
- † The group is currently in transition, but has usually met on Sundays after late service



Kaitlyn Hacker 8-20-06

Serving in Worship in August

	August 5		August 12		August 19		August 26	
	8:00 AM	10:45 AM	8:00 AM	10:45 AM	8:00 AM	10:45 AM	8:00 AM	10:45 AM
Elder	Lutek		Read		Ziegelbein		Moudy	
Assist	Read	Hite			Peters	Hite		
Altar	Kathy Hite and Bette Martin							
Acolyte	Madeline	Nate	Athan	Jonah	Ashley	Hayden	Cadence	Sarah
Greeter	Vess	Dorak	Schrank	Manning	Hampton	Abbott/Moore	Martin	Manning
Sound	Botello	Hite	Wilkerson	Pittson	Wolf	Hite	Hacker	Selvaraj
Usher	Bunger Scarth Shaltanis	T Ozlowski D Ozlowski Loewecke Ziegelbein	Frinsko Paradise Read	Cruz Moudy Carter	Scarth Bunger Messinger	Oltmann Berger Parish	Schrank C Hacker E Hacker G Hacker	Buckmeier Short Crabtree

FINANCIAL REPORT

January – June, 2018

		ACTUAL	BUDGET	VARIANCE
RECEIPTS:	Regular Offerings	\$290,834	\$306,080	(\$15,246)
	Other	\$133	\$0	\$133
	TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$290,967	\$306,080	(\$15,113)
	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$286,143	\$297,757	(\$11,614)
	RECEIPTS OVER EXPENSES	\$4,824	\$8,323	(\$3,499)

OTHER INFORMATION

1. General Operating Fund Balance	\$108,382
2. Dedicated Funds Balance	\$147,491
3. Building Note Balance	\$327,349

DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES IS THE 20TH — lol.newsletter.editor@gmail.com